

**Missoula/Mineral County
FSA Office
3550 Mullan Rd, Suite 106
Missoula, MT 59808-5125**

County Committee Members
Paul Hanson, COC Chair
Ray Rugg, COC Vice Chair
Denley Loge, Member
Bob Schroeder, Member
Jody Wills, Member

FSA Office Personnel
Collette Rulison, Lead PT
Curt Anderson, CED

Dates to Remember:

December 24 & 25 – Holiday –
Office closed

January 1 – Holiday – Office
closed

January – April – Continuation of
Brand Liens

January 21 – Holiday – Office
closed

January 28 – Annie's Project
comes to 12 locations across
Montana

January 31 – Final loan/LDP
availability date for wool/mohair
shorn in 2007

January 31 – Final LDP availability
date for 2007 unshorn pelts

March 17, 2008 – NAP sales
closing date for all crops except
value loss crops

Links:

<http://www.usda.gov>
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/MT>
<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt/>
<http://www.mt.nrcs.usda.gov>
<http://www.dnrc.state.mt.us/>
<http://extn.msu.montana.edu>



Missoula/Mineral County Winter Newsletter

Farm Service Agency

Signup Underway for Disaster Assistance Program

The Crop Disaster Program (CDP) provides benefits to farmers who suffered quantity and quality losses to 2005, 2006, or 2007 crops from natural disasters if the crop was planted before February 28, 2007, or in the case of prevented plantings, for crops that would have been planted before February 28, 2007. Producers who incurred qualifying losses in 2005, 2006 or 2007 must choose only one year to apply for benefits. Producers may apply for benefits for losses to multiple commodities as long as the losses occurred in the same crop year. **Only producers who obtained crop insurance coverage or coverage under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for the year of loss will be eligible for CDP benefits.**

Producers must have suffered quantity losses in excess of 35 percent to be eligible for CDP.

The payment rate is set at 42 percent of the established price.

Assistance, together with any crop insurance or NAP payment received for the same crop and including the value of the crop production not lost, must not exceed 95 percent of the total value of the crop absent the disaster.

Farmers may receive a maximum of \$80,000 in CDP benefits.

Signup for CDP quality losses will be announced at a later date.

COC ELECTION RESULTS

The FSA County Committee election was held December 10, 2007 for LAA 1 & 4. Paul Hanson & Denley Loge were re-elected to represent their respective LAA's and serve 3-year terms on the committee. Thank you to both Paul and Denley for their willingness to serve on the committee and thanks to all who took the time to vote for your local administrative area representatives!

January 31 Deadline to Request 2007 Wool and Mohair LDPs

Wool and mohair producers have until January 31 to apply for their 2007 crop Wool or Mohair Loan Deficiency Payment (LDP).

The LDP rates will be the difference between the per-pound loan rate and the weekly announced repayment rate. The repayment prices reflect prices being offered in the current market.

If you have not yet requested your 2007 Wool Payment, please contact the office.

Change in Farming Operation or Address

Producers are reminded to notify this office to report change in address or ownership. This is vital to assist this office in keeping records.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

NAP provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops when low yields occur as a result of natural disaster. Eligible crops are those commercially produced for food, livestock consumption, and some specialty crops. Eligible producers must pay an administrative service fee of \$100 per crop per administrative county or \$300 per producer per county, not to exceed \$900 for a producer with farming interests in multiple counties. Service fees may be waived for limited-resource producers. **Payment of a service fee does not guarantee coverage.** There are many eligibility requirements that must be met. Contact the office for more information.

The deadline to sign up for 2008 NAP coverage on all crops except Honey and Value Loss crops is March 17, 2008.

Census of Agriculture Coming Soon

Beginning December 28, 2007, the National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS) will mail out Census of Agriculture forms to collect data for the 2007 calendar year. Completed forms are due by February 4, 2008. Forms may be returned by mail or, for the first time, forms may be filled out online via a secure web site.

Conducted every five years by USDA, the Census is a complete count of the nation's farm and ranches and the people who operate them. The Census looks at land use and ownership, operator characteristics, production practices, income and expenditures and other topics. The Census provides the only source of uniform, comprehensive agricultural data for every county in the nation.

For more information about the 2007 Census of Agriculture, contact the NASS Montana Field Office at 406/441-1240 or 1-800-835-2612 or logon to the Montana Agriculture Statistics website at <http://www.agcensus.usda.gov>.

Annie's Project

Montana Market Manager will usher Annie's Project into Montana starting in January 2008. Annie's Project will be delivered in six 3-hour sessions at 12 locations around Montana. Each Monday evening session will run from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. Registration is \$100.

The class location closest to our area will be in Dillon at the University of Montana – Western

Annie's Project brings women together to find answers, sharpen business skills, grow confidence, recognize strength and build friendships in these six workshops.

To register – go to www.montanamarketmanager.org/Education&Reference/WorkshopCalendar or call the Montana Grain Growers office at 406/761-4596.

Change in Direct Deposit Account

The Debt Collection Act of 1996 mandates that payments from FSA be directly deposited into a producer's checking or savings bank account. It is important that any change in the producer's account such as type of account, bank mergers, routing number or account numbers be provided to the county office promptly to avoid possible payment delay.

Submission of Applications via E-Government

As required by the Freedom to E-File Act, eForms provides customers with the option to electronically access, fill out, and print paper forms, or obtain secure electronic access credentials for signing and transmitting forms and other documents electronically to their local Service Center. Level 2 access is required. Step-by-step instructions are available on the Montana FSA website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt> explaining the Level 2 access process. Contact the local county FSA office to complete your Level 2 registration.

Controlled Substance

Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance may be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits. Violations include planting, harvesting, possessing or growing a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium poppies and other drug producing plants.

Farm Loans:

FSA offers direct and guaranteed farm ownership and operating loan programs to farmers and ranchers who are temporarily unable to obtain private commercial credit. Rural youth loans, Beginning Farmer and Rancher, and assistance for socially disadvantaged persons are also available.

Under Represented Groups

FSA solicits and accepts nominations of under represented groups such as females and minority (American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander) producers for county committee representation. Please notify this office if you wish to be identified as a minority producer

Reasonable Accommodation Statement

USDA is required to provide the reasonable accommodations statement semiannually in county office newsletters and on printed announcements of all public meetings, seminars or FSA sponsored training, and farm program orientation sessions.

Website

Producers may access FSA information and forms on the Montana Internet site at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt>

Civil Rights/Discrimination Process

As a participant or applicant for programs or activities operated or sponsored by USDA, you have a right to be treated fairly. If you believe you have been discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, gender, age, religion, disability, or marital or familial status, you may file a discrimination complaint.

The complaint should be filed with the USDA Office of Adjudication and Compliance within 180 days of the date you became aware the alleged discrimination occurred. To file a complaint of discrimination write: USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication and Compliance, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Room 326W, Whitten Building, Stop 9410, Washington DC 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964 (voice or TDD).

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Foreign Person Rule

A foreign individual is someone who is not a citizen of the United States or a lawful alien possessing a valid Alien Registration Receipt Card (Form I-551 or I-151). A foreign entity is a corporation, trust, estate, limited partnership, limited liability company, or other similar organization that has more than 10 percent of its beneficial interest held by individuals who are not citizens of the United States or lawful aliens possessing a valid Alien Registration Receipt Card (Form I-551 or I-151). In addition to the requirements for "person" and "actively engaged in farming," the following significant contributions must be provided by an individual or entity considered to be a "foreign person." An individual determined to be a "foreign person" must provide a significant contribution of land, capital, and active personal labor.

Each foreign individual who is a member of an entity determined to be a "foreign person" must provide active personal labor to enable the entity to provide a significant contribution of active personal labor.

